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the eclectic practice of
medicine



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THE FUNDAMENTAL AND DISTINCTIVE PRINCIPLES OF
THE ECLECTIC PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

BY L. C. DOLLEY, M. D.

One needs but a limited knowledge of medical history to observe, that from its commencement, every age has teemed with the controversies of those who have made medicine their profession. Revolutions and modifications in the theories and the agents employed have succeeded each other rapidly. The ambitious and the learned have ever been striving to perfect the art of healing, but in no field of labor has the weakness of human wisdom been more manifest than in the cultivation of medical science. Every where during the past, the cotemporaries or successors of those who supposed that success crowned their labors and perfection their theories, have contested their principles, exposed their errors, and despoiled them of their glory.

The versatility of human systems, with few exceptions, has, until the present century, manifested itself in a regular succession of theories; and since then in many cotemporaneous and widely dissimilar hypotheses. In the past, Galenism with its doctrines of four elements, four humors, and four qualities of life, was followed by the many incongruities of various Arabian and European writers; most of which were finally set aside by the Paracelsian doctrines and the heroic remedies of that innovator. These were followed by the fermentative or chemical doctrines of Sylvius and Willis, and those in their turn gave place to the corpuscularian and mathematical hypothesis of Descartes, and this to the spiritual doctrines of Stahl and others.

Hedged in by close and narrow views, the science could but revolve in circles of hypotheses. The facts seen in a single aspect were alternately explained by the principles of fictitious theories

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which sooner or later gave place to others. The disposition to view all the phenomena of medicine in the light of humoralism, solidism, vitalism, spiritualism, — as mechanical, chemical, or galvanic—seemed universal. Within the past century, since the various sciences have been more generally cultivated, systems quite as distinct in their philosophy contend eagerly for favor at the same time.

Allopathy, though venerable by its age and mighty in its scientific achievements, lost gradually the confidence of many enlightened minds, both in and out of the profession. Hundreds expressed themselves more willing to meet the consequences of disease, however direful they might be, than to take treatment *Secundum Artem*. In consequence of palpable and monstrous errors in practice, tenaciously adhered to, dissatisfaction became, we may say, almost universal. Those who were compelled to take treatment did it with a horror or dread, and a propensity to dictate or entreat their physician to spare their vital fluid and save them from the lamentable effects of mercury and other harsh mineral agents. As new discoveries and reforms make their advent when there is a great public want for something of the kind; so when the errors and abuses of Allopathy, had become so conspicuous as to be generally appreciated and scarcely tolerated, new systems arose, not like the fabulous bird from paternal ashes, but from an unsatisfied want of the times. In Europe, Homœopathy, Kinesipathy, Chrono-Thermalism and other systems of cure found multitudes ready to test their virtues, and in the United States no less a number sought relief from their maladies in Thomsonism, Botanicism, and the above named systems which have been extensively propagated in this country as well as in Europe.

No one should pretend that these systems and fragments of systems do not possess distinctive features, and that the principles of each are not exclusive and limited. The originators and advocates of each of these modern and innovating systems, dazzled by an idea which promised melioration of suffering, forsook all else and wedded themselves to, and worshipped and magnified each their favorite dogma. We are not called upon to discuss any claims of such to an Eclectic and liberal policy. They are specially liable to the charge of **EXCLUSIVENESS**.

As fragments of truth are observed to be thus scattered through various systems, to sift and analyze each, and gather from them all that which common sense, science, and successful experience alike dictate, constitute **ECLECTICISM**. Where then do we find a system of medicine which is emphatically Eclectic? Many intelligent members of the Allopathic school, claim that their system is

alone entitled to be regarded as such. But Allopathy has made itself exclusive by denying that any of the innovating systems possess valuable peculiarities or excellences not possessed by itself. It has been Eclectic within certain limits. Theories and measures which emanated only from European schools and from strictly orthodox writers, have been employed by members of the Allopathic system generally, to subserve the purposes of their profession.

Many, like Dixon of London, possessed of extensive experience and a good degree of scientific knowledge, have raised their voices against the system of depletion and other barbarous measures, and because of the heterodoxy of their sentiments, Allopathy has persistingly closed her portals against them. Such principles and their exponents have been alike doomed to contempt and scorn by the whole Allopathic body.

Those whose convictions led them to adopt the principle "*Similia similibus Curantur*," with a desire to make their practice more innocent and safe, were, with their system, condemned without reservation. The pretensions of Hahnemann to limit the power of medicine in curing disease to a certain mode of action, and "*a universal law*," which is far from being generally applicable, and his superfluous twaddle about "dynamic medicines" highly potentized by "shakes" and "triturations," and about "infinitessimals" and "psora," made his system in most particulars absurd and insane. Allopathy has blinded itself to the investigations which homœopaths have made in therapeutics, to their discovery of a few, and their new application of many valuable remedies. It refuses to be taught by Homœopathy the utility of a strict dietetic regimen, also the curative influences of mental and emotional treatment, and the greater reliance to be placed in all diseases upon the *vis medicatrix naturæ*. Allopathy could not stoop to learn the least in hygiene or therapeutics from such "arrant quackery."

Those who ventured abroad to explore the fertile fields of our indigenous *Materia Medica*, and found their labors rewarded by the discovery of a large number of efficient and valuable medical agents, were not welcomed home by their more timid and conservative brethren, as is the naturalist who wanders from his comrades and furnishes new contributions to science, with greetings and honor. No, they are hissed at, condemned, and considered no longer worthy of fellowship. Some of the most valuable agents have from time to time been brought to the notice of the old school profession, by those who may have found them in the hands of blundering empirics, and these have been rejected and cast

off to add to, and strengthen the resources of new and irregular systems. The system of Samuel Thomson and his followers, though adopted mostly by those of superficial medical attainments, embraced features and measures, which under most circumstances of their application, were far preferable to the heroic and leading measures of Allopathy. It was the first great lever which helped to sunder medical science in this country. Through its instrumentality the utility of more sanative treatment was demonstrated to the public, and the properties of a large proportion of the articles composing our vegetable *Materia Medica* have been developed. Thousands have been rescued from attacks of croup, quincy, dysentery, pneumonia and various other inflammatory and febrile diseases, who would under old school treatment have been victims to its uncongenial remedies. The success of the Thomsonian measures commended the system to a large proportion of all classes of citizens, and until an ampler system stole its thunder, was in growing repute, with all except the Allopathic fraternity. They denounced everything pertaining thereto as "consummate quackery," and nurtured more and more their hatred to innovation and particularly their contempt for "*roots and herbs*." Such being the truth in reference to Allopathy, how could it be claimed that the system has been in the true sense of the word Eclectic?

A system of medicine is now taught and extensively disseminated in the United States, which was designed by its originators to be ever rational and progressive, and comprehend everything which inductive philosophy and experience might demonstrate of real value. This system of practice is known as the ECLECTIC SYSTEM, and more than all others is entitled to such designation. I propose now to notice briefly the peculiar or distinctive features of this system, prefacing with a few facts in reference to its origin and the progress it has made up to the present time. I have already intimated that the illiberality and intolerance of the old school, have so far hampered its progress and diminished to such an extent public confidence in the system, as to make a reformation indispensable. Other arts and sciences were characterized by rapid strides in improvement. Medicine seemed an ill-fated exception, the improvements in which bore no proportion to its antiquity and importance. That there have been changes from old hypotheses to new ones, from sanative and physiological agencies to those more irritating and incompatible with the human system, is not denied. But, such changes did not often constitute improvements. It is admitted, also, that many of the most gifted minds in the profession had been industrious and

honest in their investigations, and had from time to time added many valuable discoveries to the sum total of medical science, but with scarcely an exception the sphere of their usefulness had been narrowed down by the tyranny of scholastic dogmas which constituted the orthodoxy of the times. Lasage observing this state of things satirically gave vent to his convictions thus, "Death has two wings; on one are printed war, plague, famine, fire, shipwreck and all the other miseries that present him at every instant with new prey. On the other wing you behold a crowd of young physicians about to take the degree before him. Death with a demon smile dubs them doctors, having first made them swear never in any way to alter the established practice of physic." Many good and profound men, who like Lasage feeling the cruelty of such professional shackles, ventured to explore beyond the contracted outskirts of their science, and were rewarded only with ridicule and various kinds of persecution. To adopt, or encourage new views and measures of treatment, was to make ones self irregular; and to become irregular was to sacrifice professional standing and fellowship, and to experience reproach and ignominy from the numerous and selfish exponents of medical science. To emancipate ones self wholly from the established dogmas; to determine upon sifting and gathering impartially into one great storehouse, into one Eclectic or universal system the fruits of all well attested experience, all opinions and measures which common sense and rational philosophy would sustain, required a mind most philanthropic and resolute. Such a position was assumed and such labor commenced by Dr. Wooster Beach, and more extensively carried out by the lamented T. V. Morrow and his associates. Whatever may be said at the present time against weakness or aberrations in the policy and acts of Dr. Beach, to him must ever be awarded the credit of giving birth and vitality to what is now known as the American Eclectic System of Medicine. Every intelligent physician must demur strongly against much that has been said and done by Dr. Beach. If, when we observe the present apparent imperfections of his writings and his acts, we hesitate to award him the meed of praise which is due, we should remember that the task of winnowing truth from the heterogeneous materials which surrounded him, and arranging, combining, and systematizing the facts when arrived at, was an almost Herculean task. He voluntarily made public welfare paramount to professional fellowship and quietude. Although a licentiate of the old school he set himself manfully at work to effect a reformation in medicine upon rational and inductive principles. It seems that no

other man with similar opportunities could have culled with less prejudice, with more order and discrimination that which seemed worthy of adoption, not only from the tomes of Allopathy but from the successful experience of empirics of notoriety, and obscurity. Whatever was known of our indigenous *Materia Medica*, outside the profession, was first wedded to the more valuable portions of the ancient and the venerable science by Dr. Beach.

Reformation once commenced by him upon principles ample and commendatory could but be urged forward by the liberal and philanthropic in this age of progress and enterprise. The dissemination of his principles of practice, and the education of a few practitioners at an institution under his supervision in New York City, led to the organization of a school at Worthington, Ohio, in 1830. This Institution under the fostering care of Dr. T. V. Morrow and other men, mostly of thorough scientific attainments and inflexible determination, served to more fully develop and promulgate the Eclectic system. This school labored under many severe embarrassments, but in its high toned and liberal policy, and in the thoroughness of the instructions imparted, is deserving of great credit as the pioneer school. A number of those who have since been most favorably known as writers and teachers in the Eclectic ranks, received their medical training at the Worthington College. In 1844 this Institution was removed from Worthington to Cincinnati. Its history from that to the present time, as well as that of other Eclectic schools, which have been and are still in existence in various parts of the Union, is so familiar, as not to require notice in this connection. The idea which I wish to make particularly apparent here, is, that the position assumed by this class of reformers was truly and emphatically Eclectic, and that they should be known as the pioneers in this movement. The enemies of the cause have declared from time to time, that the Worthington and Cincinnati Schools were Thomsonian and ultra Botanic, and the ignorant and the prejudiced among the Thomsonians denounced it as purely allopathic. That the position assumed by the members of this system was eclectic, will appear from the writings of Prof. Morrow, and his co-laborers at that time, in the *Western Medical Reformer* which was the organ of the Eclectic Institute and the exponent of the principles of the faculty. Dr. Morrow writes—"It shall be our constant aim and object as heretofore, to discuss freely and fearlessly, and expose without stint the errors, abuses, and defects of the prevailing systems, and commend whatever is true, and of substantial value in each and all of them, without regard to the source from whence it emanated. We are not among

those who believe that the old school practice contains nothing that is valuable, but that it cherishes great and growing evils, we have not the shadow of a doubt, and just such evils as can be most triumphantly and usefully remedied, as we positively know from abundant experience; and we shall continue to enter our solemn protest against these evils as long as they continue to disgrace the noble science of our choice. We shall also continue to expose that scandalous and abominable policy which has been adopted by too many medical men, of denouncing their professional bretheren for opinions' sake, for having dared to express their dissent from the reigning doctrines of the schools. Above all things else it is most desirable to see freedom of thought and inquiry tolerated, that truth may be elicited in the investigations now in progress, touching the foundations on which the superstructure of medical science mainly rests.

"The opinion we believe is becoming almost if not quite universal among those who have watched the progress of events for the last few years that the practice of medicine is destined to undergo a great and renovating change for the better. In this opinion we most heartily concur, and shall by every fair and honorable means in our power endeavor to promote the accomplishment of an end so desirable, to sustain the dignity and honor and usefulness of the profession on principles of enlarged and enduring liberality."

If such is not a well defined position, which should clear the system against the charges of exclusiveness and co-operation with any previously existing system, I have failed to interpret correctly the language of the writer. Whatever may be said of Eclecticism as professed at this time by many half-metamorphosed Thomsonians and Allopaths, in various parts of the country, it cannot for a moment be questioned that Prof. Morrow and his associate leaders understood well what constituted true Eclecticism in medicine and were actuated in their labors by a very correct appreciation of the real interests and wants of the profession.

It will be observed from what has been said that the principles of Eclecticism relate not *wholly* to peculiarities in theory and practice, nor any other of the departments of medical science, but they have important reference to the relations which the elements of the system sustain to all other systems and to the truths of science wherever found. The fundamental and distinctive principles of the Eclectic System as understood by those who originated the same, may be said to relate,

1st. To its policy, referring to the sources of knowledge.

2nd. To the methods of investigation.

3rd. To Pathology, Theory and Practice, &c.

4th. To *Materia Medica*.

I. *The principles concerning its policy.* — Not only does the choice of the name Eclecticism, claim for those who have marshalled themselves under its banner, principles of independence and free choice, but the same is claimed for them in the most undoubted manner in the often repeated declarations of position. Such declarations as the following have been frequently made by Eclectic conventions and faculties. The leading doctrines of the eclectic medical profession are that the investigation and practice of medicine should be entirely untrammelled—that no central body—no association, combination, or conspiracy shall prescribe a certain *standard of faith or medical creed* which shall be received by all, and forced upon every member by threats of professional disgrace and ruin. We claim for ourselves and extend to all others this liberty of investigation and action. We encourage every enlightened, educated and honest physician as standing upon the same platform of professional respectability and enjoying the same rights. “The friends of American Eclecticism contend that every member of the medical profession owes his first allegiance not to societies and combinations of the profession for selfish purposes, but to the Creator and His laws, and to the fellow beings for whose health the physician is responsible. In fulfilling these great duties, the physician is bound to act in accordance with the dictates of his own judgment, and to use those measures which upon full investigation he may deem best calculated to benefit the health and preserve the lives of those entrusted to his care. Whatever the measure or remedy which may appear best—whether new or old, fashionable or unfashionable,—it is his duty to use the best means which nature, art and science have placed within his reach. If, knowing the superior value of any remedy he should fail to use it, because it had not yet become universally known, or had not been sanctioned by the votes of a majority of the profession (slow to investigate and far from infallible)—in other words, if he should shrink from his obvious and well known duty to his patient on account of the desire to imitate old examples and preserve uniformity and fashion, he is guilty of a gross violation of his most solemn and important duties. If any society or combination in the profession should exert that overawing or controlling influence over its members which would tend to restrict their freedom of action and compel them to sanction or perpetuate methods of practice contrary to the dictates of their own judg-

ment and unworthy of an enlightened age, such societies are participators in the crime of the individual practitioner, and their whole influence is pernicious to human welfare. Against all such combinations Medical Reformers enter their most earnest protest. No one can deny that Medical Science, as it stands, is miserably imperfect and full of both theoretical and practical errors. The free intelligence of the age and the continual progress of research and experiment are daily detecting and refuting these errors. Honor, truth, justice and benevolence, all demand that the practitioner should be allowed to discard these antiquated falsehoods without a moment's delay, and should be encouraged to substitute in their place every improvement and discovery which stands the test of clinical experience. This right, Eclectic Medical Reformers demand for all, and assert for themselves, regardless of all opposition.

Let ignorance, charlatanry and mal-practice be condemned on all occasions, but let conscientious differences of opinion be respected and honored ; for it is by free investigation alone that science can be improved." (Circular Address of the Eclectic Medical Institution 1849.)

It cannot be denied, that aside from the American Eclectic system as thus promulgated, no system of medicine has ever encouraged free investigation, impartial research and continued progression. This, as it may be seen, is the characteristic policy of the Eclectics. The settled convictions of such as avow this liberal policy, must constitute a part at least of their fundamental and distinctive principles. As the necessity of continual research and progress is a doctrine of this system—the name Eclectic has been objected to, and perhaps with good reason, as not of itself implying research and progress beyond the aggregate of present professional knowledge. Most assuredly the system has other characteristic and strongly marked features aside from its Eclectic policy and relations to other systems ; yet the name seems more appropriate than any other, from the fact that this system of medical reformation "owes its existence to an eclectic freedom of investigation ; to a departure from the dogmas of the schools ; and to an eclectic research in nature and in the results of various clinical experience by all classes of observers. These eclectic researches have not resulted in mere accumulations of materials, but have become organized in a great system of safe and rational practice. This system being American in its origin, is rightly styled the American system of Medicine ; but as it is not limited to American researches nor to the labors of any party, it claims the additional title of Eclectic, and bases its claim to the title

upon the fact that it is far more Eclectic in its entire course than any other system which has ever been taught in a medical school."

II. *Its principles relating to methods of investigation.*—There are two different methods which have been preserved in investigating the physical sciences; they may be called the *synthetic* and the *inductive* methods. The synthetic method constructs from a few assumed principles an hypothesis from which is attempted an explanation of all the known facts of any science. This method was pursued generally by the ancients in their investigations of all the sciences. The vague philosophy of the Alchemists affords a fit illustration of this mode of reasoning. Men of the first rank and talent in science became blinded by the imaginary philosophers' stone, and were voluntary slaves for centuries, to nothing but dreamy chimeras.

It will be remembered that one grand hypothesis of the ancient philosophers, assumed that there were but four elementary bodies, earth, air, fire and water. Various changes and combinations of these were made to explain every phenomenon and transformation in nature. But nowhere can we find more striking illustrations of the fallacy and insufficiency of the synthetic method of reasoning, than is afforded by the history of medical science. Through its whole progress, innumerable hypotheses are seen rising and falling in almost as rapid succession as the clayey tenements of those who propagated them. Homœopathy and Chrono-Thermalism are fit illustrations of medical systems established by synthetic reasoning. An hypothesis or supposed universal law is made the basis of each, and their advocates attempt to explain all the known facts of medical science in accordance with the pre-arranged hypothesis. Scarcely any feature of the medical profession seems more prominent through its whole history than the disposition to reason by synthesis. This is not to be greatly wondered at when we reflect that there is so much in hypothesis particularly attractive to the human mind, and many have supposed that heralding forth nicely constructed theories indicated true genius, and those higher attributes of the mind which command admiration and respect.

In any circumstances to be wholly guided by theories and speculative opinions, will as surely bring disappointment as the rainbow and aurora are scattered by the wings of time. The principles discovered by Pythagorus, Euclid, Kepler, Copernicus and Newton are fixed and unchanging through all time. The laws of numbers, of light, and the movements of the heavenly bodies are immutable. The relation of the squares of the sides of a right-angled

triangle ever have been and ever will remain the same. The light which Newton's prism spread out in a beautiful spectrum, was the same that first dispersed the darkness from the surface of the great deep; not so with medical science, which has to deal with frail man whose existence is limited, whose organization and vital forces are often defective, and influenced by the errors of education and habit.

"In investigating the physical or natural sciences, which include medicine in all its departments, we should stand upon the broad basis of the *inductive* or *Baconian* philosophy. The basis assumed by that philosophy is to take nothing for granted; to admit no proposition in science until it has been demonstrated by experiments; to suspend our reasoning about causes, and study effects; to abandon mere suppositions respecting the operations of nature, and to set ourselves patiently to observe what those operations are. According to the inductive philosophy nothing is to be gained in science by assuming as true any point which is doubtful, or not susceptible of proof. Science implies knowledge, not conjecture or opinion. To give any department of human enquiry the rank of a science, it is necessary to collect together clearly established facts, and by fair and legitimate reasoning to deduce those useful truths which naturally flow from them. So long as we pursue this course in our reasonings they are strictly scientific; but the moment we deviate from it, we tread in conjectures. These principles cannot be too frequently or too forcibly inculcated, especially in an enquiry concerning medicine, every step in which affects so deeply the welfare of society. The Eclectic practice is established and developed upon the inductive method of reasoning.

Instead of governing our practice by any predetermined theory, and being content to follow immediately in the wake of some professional luminary, we call no man master; and discard no principle or maxim in medicine which observation and experiment have thoroughly established. We acknowledge that several very important principles have been developed in the Homœopathic, Chrono-Thermal, Thomsonian, and other fragmentary systems, but do not allow the more recently developed principles of any one of these systems to so dazzle our eyes that we cannot receive light from others also. Without conforming our practice to the dogmas of any exclusive sect, we profess to call from each only those principles and measures which bear the surest impress of *truth*. In the freedom afforded us by our inductive philosophy, we can listen to the testimony in favor of every system without supposing any one contains "the whole truth and nothing but the

truth." We strive to shun old errors and abuses, and practice in accordance with such principles as have been developed and demonstrated by the most careful cultivators of medical science in Europe and America.

III. *The principles relating to Pathology, and Theory and Practice.*—It has been charged against Eclecticism, that it has no principles. It has been so charged by individuals who seem not to understand that sound logical inferences constitute *principles* in medical science, unless those inferences pertain strictly to pathology, or the *modus operandi* of medicine. What are the settled and established maxims which govern the policy, relations and methods of investigation of the Eclectic fraternity but characteristic principles! Such principles alone when exercised by scientific and philanthropic minds would constitute a system worthy of high regard. But Eclectic principles are not thus limited. It is not claimed that this class of physicians advocate views of pathology and practice which are wholly novel and original with themselves. It is with more justice claimed, that the principles relating to these departments are chiefly a new collection and combination of principles, many of which have been adopted by adherents of more exclusive systems. There has not been heretofore sufficient care to systematize and define such characteristics of the system, and hence most of them must at this time be found, rather from a virtual consent to them, manifested in their common use and application, than from any published or documentary evidence. To point out briefly the leading principles in pathology and practice seems to be more within the province of this article than to discuss and elucidate the same at length. Among those which may be considered as fundamental, my acquaintance with the system leads me to recognize the following:

That exalted action manifested in febrile and inflammatory diseases is not the sum and substance of the disease, and therefore requiring depletory measures to overcome it, but rather an effect which will subside when the real causes are removed or overcome:

That the human system does not furnish itself with too much vitality nor an excess of blood, previous to an invasion, or during the progress of ordinary acute diseases. It rather makes use of what may exist at the time in the best manner that the nature of the disease and the laws governing the system will admit, and the same is therefore to be always husbanded and assisted by the physician:

That clinical experience and correct philosophy both prove that bloodletting is not only a delusive and uncertain remedy for in-

flamimations and fevers, but often positively injurious and dangerous to the life of the patient :

That there is no specific antiphlogistic nor antifebrile virtue in mercury, a proposition admitted by the most conservative in Allopathy. (See Dunglison's Therapeutics.) Its use often causes disease and hastens death and should be superceded by remedies which will accomplish in a safer and more efficient manner all the purposes for which it has been used :

That the excess of fibrin which shows itself in inflammation is an effect and not a cause of the morbid action and this cannot be removed or reduced by venesection.

A few remarks as to the proximate cause and essential character of inflammation may here be introduced which will make clear the truth of the above propositions. In the natural condition of the circulation we see the fibrin or white corpuscles made or growing out of the albumen of the blood ; and these white corpuscles flowing along the surface of the blood vessels for the purposes of nutrition. Now what has nature done or provided in case of injuries or local irritation that a reparative action may take place ? She has provided that the excitement caused by that injury or the morbid action upon the nervous filaments controlling the capillary and arterial circulation in the part, shall cause an increase of fibrin, and an effusion of coagulable lymph so essential to the healing of wounds and fractures. This is an exalted condition of the vitality of the surfaces of the blood vessels, and this is essential to an increase of nutrition, and the vitality not only produces an increase of fibrin, but causes it to adhere to the surface of the blood vessels, or to be attracted to them as in the nutritive process, thus protecting the nervous filaments and other parts from irritation. The blood is not at first in fault but is changed in its character by the increased vitality which is simply a stimulus to nutrition, as sun light and warmth are to the nutrition of plants. (See P. C. Dolley, M. D., on inflammation in Eclectic Journal of Medicine 1852.) It becomes most evident to those viewing inflammation in this light that it is not desirable to lessen the quantity of blood in the system. It is a fact well demonstrated that weakness or debility favors inflammation. In consumption and fevers, parts upon which the patient lies are much more liable to become inflamed and to mortify, than in cases of fractures where the patient is healthy and strong, though confined to the bed the same number of weeks. Andral says " I have, then naturally to inquire how far bleeding, repeated more or less frequently, has the power of removing the excess of fibrin in the blood, rapidly or gradually ? Now it is

found that however frequent or abundant the bleedings, the fibrin increases none the less, if these bleedings are performed in the early stages of an inflammation of some intensity, or, in other words, at the period of the ordinary increase of the disease; on the other hand, the inflammation does not prevent there being found, after each bleeding a progressive diminution of the globules. It seems, then that where the blood has set about producing an excess of fibrin, no matter what is done, a certain time must elapse before this disposition is exhausted. The most copious loss of blood does not effect the immediate removal of the lesions of the solid; a certain space of time is always necessary for accomplishing this, and for the extinction of the fever. So that the fibrin—the quantity of which in the blood represents the degree of inflammation—obeys the same law which makes the latter continue for a certain time, and pass through certain stages.”

“I might cite several cases in which the same person having been bled some days before the outset of the phlegmasia, and again during the course thereof, his blood, which contained the normal quantity of fibrin at the first depletion, was much more abundantly provided with it at the subsequent ones.”

We may say then that bleeding increases the inflammatory condition of the system. It probably does it by increasing the irritability of the system and thus augmenting the amount of fibrin in the blood.

It is a cardinal principle of the Eclectic system that no medical treatment should be allowed, which permanently impairs or injures the vital powers; that no such treatment is in any case necessary or proper, and that in the choice of remedies we should prefer those which are safest and calculated to act most nearly in accordance with the laws of health. “We reject *in toto* the most pernicious features of old school practice, not that we consider them entirely useless, but because they are far inferior in their results to the means upon which we rely. The habitual internal use of certain intensely poisonous metals, as mercury, antimony, arsenic, lead, copper, &c., we consider a gross violation of the dictates of medical philosophy and experience—an egregious delusion which has brought millions to a premature grave, and which at the present time occasions an immense amount of suffering. This delusion has arisen from a profound ignorance of the true character of a number of important remedies, and an indifference to the enormous evils now arising from the mercurial practice.”

Eclectics believe that the salivary glands are not the best me-

dium of derivation, and the essential and necessary emunctories in cases where it has been customary in old school practice to produce ptyalism; neither do they regard morbid conditions of the system as requiring the intervention of the "*peculiar action*" of the mercurial panaceas. With them, it is a principle to remove disease, not by an artificial drain from the median cephalic vein, or a forced one from the salivary glands or the liver, but by a direct regulation of the deranged vital forces, by a restoration of the secretions and the functions of organs which may be found impaired and which nature points to us as her own emunctories; and this to be done by agents the *best calculated* to accomplish the purpose without injury to the future constitutional stamina of the patient. We know that the Thomsonian theory is based wholly upon the regulation of the calorific function; while the fashion of allopathy has been to direct nearly all its measures with reference to the quantity of blood, and the functions of the liver, bowels and nervous system. Hydropathists, observing the great extent of influence which may be exerted in nearly all diseases of the system by directing hydro-therapeutics to the cutaneous surface, have confined their treatment mostly to the skin, and seldom seek an elimination of effete and morbid matter through the liver, kidneys and alimentary canal. Eclectics consider the functions of all the organs worthy of attention, and without giving undue prominence to any, seek to restore, in each particular case of disease, all such as will favor returning health.

IV. *Principles relating to Materia Medica*—We may say the greatest errors in the old practice, reformed by the Eclectic system, are found in its *materia medica*. The Eclectic *Materia Medica* is pre-eminently American in its character. In its selection more regard has been shown to natural and immutable laws and the evident adaption of medicines, than to transatlantic authorities. Hence the Eclectic *Materia Medica* includes a much larger proportion of medicines indigenous to the American continent. A cardinal principle of Eclecticism is to substitute safe agents for those which are harsh, irritating and often uncontrollable in their action. This principle must exclude from practice quite a number of the leading therapeutic agents in common use with old school physicians. No candid and experienced physician of the present day will deny, what an observing public have long asserted, that the various preparations of mercury, antimony, arsenic, and some other minerals, cannot be administered in the many conditions of the system in which they have been used, without a risk of immediate or prospective injury to the patient.

There will be found a few among the prejudiced and ignorant who will deny what is here asserted.

Dr. James Hamilton, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians &c. &c., several years ago affirmed, that, when the effects of mercury upon the human body are accurately investigated and duly considered, it cannot fail to appear that infinite injury must accrue from its use." Dr. Reese of London, member of the Royal College of Surgeons &c., years ago declared, that, "poor must be the resources of that physician's mind and very narrow his knowledge of medical botany, who cannot from the vegetable kingdom alone, cure most of the diseases of the human frame. Even the specific of *mercury*, if we were driven to the necessity of a substitute, might probably be rivaled in some of the productions of nature. We know not whether we have most reason to hail the discovery of mercury as a blessing, or regard it as a *curse*, since the diseases it entails are as numerous as those which it cures. There are serious objections also to other articles of the metallic world; antimony and arsenic are dangerous remedies in the hands of the ignorant, and mankind perhaps in the aggregate would be benefited by their expulsion from medical practice." Dr. Hiram Corson late President of the Pennsylvania State Medical Society, in his address before the annual meeting of that society in 1853, after showing the results of a reckless and indiscriminate use of mercury, says; "many physicians pertinaciously adhere to the free use of mercury, as though they could only *thus* establish their right to a place in our profession; they turn with contempt from all remedies offered as substitutes for the mercurials. They do not seem to know that the prejudice against mercury did not *originate* with quacks, and is not kept up by them *alone*. An examination of the *Transactions* of the American Medical Association and of our state reports, will show that in the treatment of nearly every disease mercury holds a place. In typhoid fever, dysentery and cholera, the diseases most noticed, it occupies a prominent position, and by many physicians is used in every stage and condition of these diseases. And yet Dr. Baskin of Mercer county, speaking of a severe typhoid fever which prevailed for several months, and which, under treatment different from his own, was extremely fatal, disapproves of mercury and thinks it injurious. Dr. Ellis, also, in the same epidemic, says not one in twenty proved fatal under a mild treatment; whereas under the use of calomel and antimony more than one half died, and several entire families were swept off by the frightful ravages of the disease. Dr. Coffey, of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Johnson of Alabama, think calomel does harm in ty-

phoid fever. Dr. Parson, of Alabama, speaking of dysentery, declared that mercurials in every instance did harm; Dr. Bates writes: "when mercurials and opiates were used, the cases progressed slowly but certainly downward, until other means were resorted to." Dr. Ray, of Paris, Ky., in speaking of mercurials in typhoid fever and dysentery, declares: "In a majority of all the cases in which we have seen them used, they have had a decidedly injurious effect, and we are sure we have seen simple cases of dysentery converted into grave ones by a dose or two of calomel. In a case of simple dysentery, we would not give an ounce of salts for all the calomel in the shops. We will produce a more free discharge of bile by salts than you can possibly do by calomel." Of five hundred and ten cases of dysentery, occurring in seventeen years, Dr. Ray lost only five. Some there are, up and down in our country, who use this agent in every disease and under every condition of disease; and yet an examination of the State or National reports do not show that there is any stage or condition of typhoid fever, dysentery or any other disease, to which the remedy is certainly applicable." I have not read the signs of the times aright, if the fear of mercury has not taken tens of thousands of patients out of our hands and given them to the most mercenary quacks, Dr. Corson sees that the common use of the mercurials has been ruinous to the prosperity and popularity of the "regular" profession. He calls attention to the question "whether there are any diseases to the cure of which mercury is absolutely essential," and expresses the hope that there may be found a safe and efficient substitute for it.

The founders of the Eclectic system had similar convictions to the men above quoted, and manifested their faith by their works, by honestly setting themselves at work to find and introduce into the profession, safer and more efficient cholagogues. They felt that as the indiscriminate use of mercury was productive of great mischief, and doing more than all other causes combined, to "create a prejudice against scientific medicine, to destroy the confidence of the community in its practitioners, and to drive them from the physician to the nostrum dealer," they *must* introduce substitutes, though in doing so they might, like many reformers and benefactors before them, be called for a time *quacks* and *empirics*. Thanks to their heroism and labor, it is now abundantly demonstrated to all familiar with Eclectic resources, that, for arousing the liver, affecting the secretions generally, and even for producing salivation of a harmless character, leptandrin, podophyllin, apocynin, iridin and occasional combinations of other articles, are much more reliable than mercury, and are attended with none of its hazard.

Evidence is not lacking, to show that the toxicological properties of antimony and arsenic make them quite as obnoxious as are the mercurials. Eclecticism discards these, also, because all of the indications for which they are used, can be met with more safety, promptness and certainty with other remedies. For the sedative, expectorant, and diaphoretic effects of tartarized antimony, more than substitutes are found in aconite, gelsemium, sanguinaria, asclepias and lobelia. No beneficial effects can be obtained from arsenic, which cannot also be obtained from hydrastin, quinine, xanthoxylin and salicin. These assertions will never be disputed by those who will make a fair and impartial trial of the new school remedies.

Eclecticism does not eschew medicines of a mineral origin which abundant experience has proved to be innocuous and serviceable for the removal of disease, when used in suitable quantities and at suitable times. Such medicines are frequently used; among which may be mentioned, the preparations of iron, lime, potassa, soda, sulphur, and many of the sulphates and carbonates. No article of real therapeutic value is thrown aside, which, with our present knowledge of chemical and physiological laws, can be used without risk or detriment to the future integrity and health of the system.

But, anxiously inquires some disciple of Samuel Thomson, or some ignoramus who scoffs at everything which may have been associated with science, or more particularly with allopathic practice, do Eclectics use blisters, opium, hyoscyamus and other narcotics? No intelligent Eclectic will deny that in combating disease in its many phases, counter-irritants and derivatives are often serviceable. Among the agents for accomplishing these ends, blisters, although usually of secondary value, are by no means entirely discarded. With the various rubefacients at hand, with dry cupping, and irritating plasters, the instances where it becomes necessary to vesicate with Spanish flies are very rare. Irritability and pain often require the use of anodynes and sedatives. When such are indicated, and there is reason to believe that the ends will be accomplished more satisfactorily, by the use of preparations of opium or hyoscyamus than by scutellaria, cypripedium, or similar agents, the principles of Eclecticism permit practitioners to meet the demands of the case with such narcotics or sedatives as can be used without jeopardizing the constitutional stamina and future health of the patient. There is no doubt but every educated and discriminating physician may count opium, hyoscyamus and many of the narcotics among his innocuous remedies.

From the foregoing remarks, no one can fail to understand the principles governing the Eclectic school in the selection of its *Materia Medica*. It will readily be inferred that agents derived from the vegetable kingdom are preferred on account of their more physiological action, and their susceptibility of digestion and elimination. The establishment of these principles has already been followed by great improvements in *materia medica* and pharmacy. These improvements consist chiefly in the introduction of not less than eighty new medicines, which are very prominent among the valuable resources of the system; also in the resurrection of many (not less than forty) medicinal agents which had become buried in Allopathic forgetfulness, and, like old laws upon statute books for the suppression of certain social evils, were as a dead letter and forgotten. For the interest of the great number, who have no just conception of these improvements, I here copy from King's new American Eclectic Dispensatory a list of articles or their concentrated principles which are absolutely new and which are yet confined to the practice of medical reformers:

Aletridin,	Diervilla,	Iridin,	Pychanthemum
Alnuin,	Dioscorea,	Jeffersonia,	Rhusin,
Ampelopsis,	Dioscorein,	Juglandin,	Robinia,
Antennaria,	Echinospermum,	Leptandrin,	Rudbeckia,
Apocynin,	Epigæa,	Lobelia, oil of,	Scutellaria,
Asclepias Incar,	Equisetum,	Menisperm,	Senecin,
Asclepidin,	Erechthites,	Mitchella,	Sesquicarb. of po-
Aster,	Erechthites, oil of,	Monotropa,	tassa,
Baptisin,	Euonymus,	Myricin,	Silphium,
Bidens,	Euonymin,	Onosmodium,	Spirit Vapor bath,
Buxus,	Eupatorin,	Osmunda,	Staphylea,
Caulophyllum,	Eupatorium Purp.,	Ostrya,	Stellaria,
Caulophyllin,	Eupurpurin.	Parthenium,	Stillingia, oil of,
Ceanothus,	Galium,	Phytolaccin,	Uvaria,
Ceanothin,	Gelseminum,	Podophyllin,	Uvularia,
Chelone,	Geraniin,	Polemonium,	Vernonia,
Cimicifugin,	Gerardia,	Polytrichum,	Viburnum,
Cornu Cervinæ	Goodyera,	Prunin,	Viburin,
Calcinautum,	Helonin,	Ptelea,	Xanthoxylin, and
Corydalis,	Hieracium,	Ptelein,	oil of,
Corydalia,	Hierochloa,	Pteris Atrop,	Xanthoxylum, etc.
Cypripedin,	Hydrastin,	Pterospora,	

Prof. King remarks: "the extensive use of the foregoing articles, and their consequent substitution on many occasions for the favorite remedies formerly in use, constitute a practical improvement, the value of which can scarcely be estimated; and the simplest statement of what we believe and know to be true, as

regards the superior success in practice resulting from these improvements in the *Materia Medica*, would be regarded by those entirely unacquainted with the facts, as the language of extravagant enthusiasm. For their truth, however, we can but appeal to the final tribunal, *universal experience*." In the large list of concentrated medicines alone, we find fruits of a research worthy of great promise. Already we have for daily use more than twenty-five concentrated remedies which for convenience and reliability, are surpassed by nothing in medical science. This channel of investigation is destined to gain for the system a glorious future in popularity and usefulness.

I cannot close these remarks, without alluding to the great wrong that has been, and is being done to the principles of Eclecticism by many of its professed friends. Not appreciating the true spirit of the system, as set forth by its leaders and its patrons, they have continually labored to confound this reform with the theory, and distinctive features of Thomsonism, and with the ignorance and exclusive herbalism of Botanic generally. Such efforts have not been limited to those having a wrong conception of rational Eclecticism. Some occupying positions making them teachers and exponents of the system, have debased themselves by encouraging and disseminating this sentiment, wholly for selfish purposes. Very many who had "taken up" the practice of medicine upon Thomsonian or Botanic principles, seeing the favorable reception of the Eclectic practice, and perhaps fearing the rivalry of a practitioner of a more rational and liberal system, advertise themselves forthwith as Eclectics. And if their claims are called in question or disallowed, they are prompt to inquire, "what is the use of all this dissension and disagreement among medical reformers?" "We are all Eclectics"—all "one body of medical reformers!" And thus Thomsonism, contemplating in its exclusiveness an entire subversion of allopathic principles, right or wrong, is by turns condemning, denouncing, approving and claiming fellowship, with Eclectic principles and practice.

Thomsonians from the days of their venerated leader, Samuel Thomson, down to the meeting of their Baltimore Convention, have agreed in reiterating certain dogmas such as "Disease is a unit,"—"Fever is caused or consists in an obstruction of the general circulation; if the obstruction is confined to a small region of the body it is inflammation." "Upon the normal development of animal heat are dependant all the vital manifestations; that it is as much the dynamical agency upon which these are dependant in the animal system as are the different phenom-

ena of action in the steam engine." (L. Bankston.) Do Eclectics adopt these as their fundamental and distinctive principles? By the adoption of such dogmas the Thomsonian system contemplates an entire overthrow of medical science as it has existed heretofore. They often admit this, as in the following declaration: "Thomsonism being *directly opposed to the theories and practice of the old school*, how could it be otherwise than unpopular, but the way to make it popular is to do justice to the practice by carrying out its principles."—(J. W. COMFORT.)

How was the system viewed by Dr. Morrow, one whom all true Eclectics are proud to call their leader? He says; "The tendency and aim of the Thomsonian system is a total subversion of all medical science, and a substitution of a limited patent system of practice founded upon the ignorance, prejudice and dogmas of a single individual. The title of '*Medical revolutionists*' assumed by some of the most prominent individuals of the Thomsonian fraternity is very appropriate, and may with propriety be applied generally to the advocates of the *steam* and *pepper* system. For such individuals to be styled *Medical Reformers*, whether by themselves or others, is slanderous and culculated grossly to deceive and misguide the public mind. Since Samuel Thomson obtained letters patent to enable him to *steam* and *pepper* the sick legally, and to authorize others to do the same, his system (if indeed it can be called one) has been so industriously puffed by interested agents and sub-agents almost without number, that there can scarcely an individual be found, who has not heard more or less of the Thomsonian or steam practice. Hence when any system or course of practice is mentioned as differing from the ordinary fashionable practice of the day, whether under the name of *Reformed* or *Eclectic*, it is immediately regarded by the great mass of community through lack of proper knowledge of the Thomsonian or *steam system*, as being identical with it, or a branch of it," (Western Medical Reformer, March 1838). Does it appear from this that the objects and principles of these are fundamentally the same? It may be admitted that a large class of the Thomsonian practitioners have improved upon the old routine, but to show that the most learned and influential of them are not Eclectic and have no sympathy with the Eclectic system, I make an extract from the call of Thomsonian physicians for the United States convention at Baltimore in Oct. 1852, signed by a large number of the leading men in their ranks in several States of the Union. "We would be perhaps regarded as deceptive, were we to withhold the fact that our object is not to attempt to harmonize or compromise our principles or practice with Eclecticism,

or mongrelism in any shape; and we do not wish to be regarded as inviting such to our convention! We desire an unembarrassed organization of an orthodox profession which we regard as constituting the great body of what has been known as the *Botanic* fraternity." Wonderfully eclectic!

The committee appointed by the Georgia Reformed Medical Convention, to recommend to sister States co-operation in assembling the Baltimore convention, gave it as their opinion, that "the principles and practice of the delegates must be in strict conformity to what is properly known as Botanic or Thomsonian theory and practice—must square with the 'no poison' theory to admit them to seats in it. If any delegates are known to give opium, blister, give mineral or vegetable poisons, they will *save themselves the mortification of being refused admittance into the Baltimore Convention by remaining at home*"! Eclectic with a vengeance!

For the further benefit of those who are laboring to confound and identify Thomsonism with Eclecticism and are thus working against the original and characteristic spirit of the latter, I may be indulged in quoting again from the early writing of Dr. Morrow, which will show strikingly the relations those systems sustained to each other in the infancy of the Eclectic movement.

"A most unrelenting war has been waged by a few of the would-be leaders among the Thomsonians, against the members of the Reformed Medical Society of the United States. Every species of falsehood, which the worst of human feelings could devise, has been unblushingly trumpeted forth for the purpose of creating a prejudice in the public mind against the advocates of a respectable and scientific system of medical reform; more particularly with a view of injuring the Worthington school. The pages of the Thomsonian Recorder, the Thomsonian Vindicator, and the Botanic Sentinel in particular, have abounded in these misrepresentations, most of which we have deemed totally unworthy of the slightest notice from a consideration of the character of those with whom they originated. It has been stated by these wiseacres, that we have no principles to govern our practice except those commonly recognized by the old school practitioners. That we use as internal remedies the strongest vegetable poisons. That we renounce the use of calomel and upon this we pin our reformation. 'That we make use of poisons that would bow the strength of a Hercules.' That we condemn bloodletting as a general thing, but practice it in particular cases. 'That we recommend corrosive sublimate in alterative syrups,' together with a host of other things equally false and nonsensical.

"We are well aware that the character of our Institution has

suffered in the estimation of many well meaning and honest Thomsonians who are in the habit of placing confidence in the truth of the above charges ; but it has suffered infinitely more in the estimation of the great body of the community by that horde of ignorant pretenders to medicine of every denomination, but mostly belonging to the steam fraternity, who have claimed to be connected with it in some way or other, in order to bolster themselves up in public estimation. It is by no means uncommon to see their announcements to the public, headed, "Reformed practice of medicine," "Reformed Medical Practitioner," implying evidently that the individual emanated either from the Reformed or Eclectic schools, and that he is a graduate and pursues the same course of practice that is recognized by these institutions. There are hundreds of these impostors endeavoring to palm themselves off on the public on the credit of our institution, as scientific and well educated physicians, inducing a belief that they have some regular connection with it, and many of them, for a short season, succeed in carrying out their impositions to a considerable extent, but it is soon discovered that they have no medical education, no qualifications to practice the healing art ; that they are guilty perhaps of some gross malpractice, and have to fly their country in order to avoid the pains and penalties of a legal prosecution. The consequence is that all their blunders, ignorance and impositions are credited to the reformed schools of medicine, and in this way the Worthington School has been more seriously injured than by the operations of all other causes combined. The idea is caught with great avidity and extensively circulated by its enemies that it is a Thomsonian school, and the conduct of such individuals is referred to as sufficient proof of the fact. Against all this smuggling, this public cheating, once for all, in behalf of ourselves and the members of the Reformed medical society of the United States, we enter our solemn protest, and respectfully ask the public to regard no one who cannot produce a diploma signed by the proper officers of the institution, as having any regular connection with it.

"We hope that every *steam doctor*, hereafter, when he offers his services to the people as a practitioner of medicine, will come out in his true colors. Instead of heading his advertisement 'Reformed Practice,' let him head it 'Steam or Thomsonian Practice.' The public can then understand what manner of man he is, and what kind of physician they are about to employ ; and pursuing this course he can further avail himself of the full benefits of all the popularity of his favorite system of practice."—*Western Medical Reformer*, July 1837.

"It is worse than folly for men who are themselves ignorant of the first principles of medicine, to talk about reforming and revolutionizing the science. Such men do not command the confidence of an enlightened community, neither do they deserve it; and they are perhaps at this time doing more towards destroying the prospects of the cause, than the combined efforts of all its enemies. In our opinion no scheme can ever succeed in effecting a reformation in medicine, which does not stand supported by the immutable and eternal pillars of scientific truth, and whose disciples not only believe an intimate acquaintance with the various departments of science essentially necessary, but manifest a willingness to supply themselves with that information before they embark in the practice of one of the most responsible callings incident to the condition of man on earth—to wit, the practice of medicine." (*T. V. Morrow—Western Medical Reformer, Jan. 1837.*) Such language needs to be reiterated, and sounded as loudly at the present time as seventeen years ago. Happy will be the day for Eclectic principles, when they are rescued from the dishonorable association into which they have been brought by ignorance, knavery and imposture. Let those who desire the success of true and rational Eclecticism, spare no effort to undeceive the public mind upon a point of so much moment. Every physician, after having labored diligently and at great expense for the honors of his *alma mater*, and to qualify himself in the best possible manner for future usefulness, on locating in any place, even at this day, finds himself embarrassed and his labors greatly curtailed by the influence and assumption of such ignorant pretenders as Dr. Morrow portrayed. Let those who assume the name Eclectic without availing themselves of means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of all the departments of medical science, be made to understand, that, in attempting to enrobe themselves in the lion's skin, they will only make the length of their ears more conspicuous. Those whose sympathies are for "blundering empiricism," or who would make an easy transit for the ignorant to enter the profession, perhaps chiefly to elevate themselves to "Professors" and leaders, must be cut loose and despised as the betrayers of a noble cause.

If there be more certainty in Eclectic principles, and their intelligent application produces the melioration of the practice of medicine, then there is greater perfection in the system. In this direction, and this only, will we be rewarded by reducing to the lowest extent the catalogue of *opprobria medicorum*, although such may not altogether cease to exist. Occupying this position, the elevated character, the greater perfection, the enlarged benefits of our science, honored by society, and acknowledged as a blessing to our race, fills our sight as did the promised land, the vision of the inspired seer on Pisgah's Mount!

